



State of Vermont Media Planning Guide

Media Planning Guide

If your organization has an advertising or outreach need included in its overall marketing plan, a separate media plan is recommended. Often the largest budget consideration in your marketing plan is media costs. This is money spent for television/radio air time, ad space in print media, or other messaging outlets. With this kind of monetary investment it makes sense to have a solid media strategy to effectively utilize that investment.

The main objective of a media plan is developing a course of action on a routine basis to best achieve its advertising/outreach goals.

In developing your media plan, you will:

- Review your marketing objectives (called out in your marketing plan)
- Review the all media options available
- Evaluate each source against your objectives
- Set your budget
- Mapping out your plan
- Sample annual media plan (PDF)
- Develop a flowchart or schedule outlining ad appearances in each media source
- Summarize your plan
- Negotiate with media representatives to execute your plan (or hire a media buyer) this is an outside website
- Evaluating your media plan after execution



State of Vermont media planning guide (.PDF- 330kb)

This information was compiled from the following sources:

Media Plans: http://www.businesstown.com/advertising/basic-media.asp

Principles of Media Planning: http://www.marketingpower.com/content1024.php

http://marketing.about.com/cs/publicrelations/a/prplan6steps.htm

http://www.tcsg.org/sfelp/toolkit/mediaskeletonCommun 01.pdf

Review your marketing objectives

Before you start to create a media plan you need to develop a strong understanding of the product or service your organization provides and you're overall marketing needs (you should have a marketing plan in place.)

Who is your audience?

The first step is to identify a target audience. This is the key to any media plan.

For example, if your organization provides health care insurance information, which "everyone needs," but your media plan must be developed to reach your <u>primary audience</u>-say the uninsured. Another example, the Agency of Agriculture wants to promote buying local produce. Their message could benefit "everyone" but their target audience (those who will take action) is the average household's principle shopper.

Describe your audience

Once you have selected your primary target audience, collect all the information you can about them. Start with statistics on demographics or lifestyles. Professional associations or trade journals can be a resource for this type of information. Collect any relevant articles or information about your audience. The more information you collect the more effective your campaign will be.

Expanding your reach

After your target audience has been identified, you may consider expanding your plan to reach those outside the target who may have a lower but still important influence. For example, the buy local campaign may target the average household's principle shopper but you may want to expand your reach to target restaurant owners as well.



primary target audience



secondary audience

Review all media options available

Once you have identified and described our audience, list all of the media available to them. This may include:

- Television
- Radio
- Newspaper (Daily, weeklies, community)
- Magazines (local, national, international)
- Web Online
- Other (blogs, podcasts, inserts, flyers)



To start, study past successes. If you have successfully advertised using a specific media channel (TV, radio, web etc) in the past, consider them first if your budget allows.

NOTE: Both television and larger magazine advertising can eat up 80 percent to 90 percent of the budget.

NOTE: Newsprint and radio often reinforce awareness, through high short-term impact on the consumer and are often the most cost efficient.

Things to consider

Is there a seasonal promotion to support your message? For example, State Parks promotes overnight camping during the spring and summer months. Look for special newspaper inserts or TV/radio programs that highlight summer activities. Consider sport sponsorships/mascots, or collaborative messaging with other departments or private entities.

Is media cost affected by seasonal fluctuations? Television/radio ad costs normally increase during prime promotional periods such as political and holiday seasons (e.g. October – December). You may get more "value-added" (extra air time, prime spots or more public service announcements -PSA play) during a slower season such as March – May.

Evaluate each source against your objectives

First define the goals of your advertising campaign, and explain why and how your media sources can meet these goals.

How will each source reach the largest portion of your primary and secondary target audiences? Research each source's demographics/circulation and other statistics associated with them. You can contact a sales representative for specific audience information. Compare those statistics to the information you have gathered on your target audience.

Examples of demographic/circulation information sheets (provided by individual media source) - Click on any image for full size example









Set your budget

Often the most defining part of the planning process is to set a budget. This is normally a piece of your marketing dollars that have been set aside for message distribution. Unfortunately, there is no concrete formula to setting aside sufficient budget since many factors must be considered, including:

- media outlet,
- reach/frequency objectives,
- length of time ad will run, and
- the need for print collateral (may involve external design services.)

Always plan for the maximum amount allowed and plan down from there.

Mapping out your plan

When you or your team has decided which media source/s will most effectively deliver your message, the next step is to create the plan. When developing your media plan, it is best to create a mix of media types, such as television/radio day-parts (days are broken into segments to categorize audiences – see glossary) with a combination of print media, in order to optimize your budget and expand reach. This basic plan can be adjusted once prices, added value (extras that add value to your media purchase for example, free airtime or premium placement) or other promotional opportunities have been negotiated.

During the media outlining process your goal is to optimize the following items within your budget constraints:

- reach (the number of people who will see the ad at least once)(found in a media press kit),
- frequency (the number of times the average member of your target audience sees the ad) (this varies greatly per medium based on repetition and shelf life),
- the number of weeks of advertising or the size of the ad (keep in mind the larger the ad size, the more expensive) (if budget allows, repeat your ad at least three times per medium to ensure audience awareness) and
- geographic coverage (how many markets or how large is the geographic area covered).

Once your plan is sketched out, you need to start gathering the costs for the ad placements.

- Television and radio costs are normally priced by cost per target audience rating point (see media glossary for more information). Consider TV and radio costs first as they can dominate a budget.
- Monthly magazine and newspaper rates vary depending on length of run, size of ad, non-profit status and color.
- When pricing out your media plan, start with the highest or open rate for planning purposes.

NOTE: You may consider creating an alternate plan for cost and reach comparison until a strategy is finalized that best accomplishes your messaging goals. For example, your original plan consists of heavy television and radio advertisements with very little print collateral – you may consider creating an alternate plan that balances both TV/Radio to print advertising to expand your reach, lower costs and highlights more PSA's.

Sample annual media plan

(This is provided for illustrative purposes only and does not reflect actual media plans)

State Parks - 2007 media plan (sample only)

Total media budget = \$xx,xxx.xx

Total media budg	et = \$xx,xxx.xx	1	1	1			
Promotion	Vendor Name	Media type	Season/ time of ad	Total			
overnight	Burlington Area Newspaper	Daily					
camping	Group	newspaper	June-Labor day	\$xx.xx			
	Clear Channel Broadcasting	Radio	June-Labor day	\$xxx.xx			
	MT Mansfield TV Inc	Cable TV	June-Labor day	\$xxxx.xx			
	New Market Press	Newspaper	June-Labor day	\$xx.xx			
	Seven Days Newspaper	Newspaper	June-Labor day	\$0 (PSA)			
	TVRA LLC	Cable TV	June-Labor day	\$xxx.xx			
	VPR	Radio	June-Labor day	\$xxx.xx			
	World	Newspaper	June-Labor day	\$xx.xx			
Total overnight camping							
nature trails	HMC advertising - brochure	print	year round	\$xxxx.xx			
Total nature trails							
fishing in SP	Elk Publishing (Co-buy with DFW)	Newspaper	April - July	\$xxxx.xx			
	Hawkeye	Newspaper	April - July	\$xx.xx			
	LCI fishing Derby + 1/4 page Ad	sponsorship	April - July	\$xxx.xx			
	Primemedia	radio	April - July	\$xxxx.xx			
	Vermont Sporting Journal	magazine	April - July	\$xxx.xx			
Total fishing in state parks							
Day use	Barton Chronicle	Newspaper	May - late Oct	\$xx.xx			
	Newport Daily news	Newspaper	May - late Oct	\$xx.xx			
	NE Kingdom Radio	Radio	May - late Oct	\$xx.xx			
	VT Life Magazine	magazine	May - late Oct	\$xxxx.xx			
	Elk Publishing - web ad	web	May - late Oct	\$xx.xx			
Total day use							
VT Days - Coop				\$xxxx.xx			
with HP	Seven Days Newspaper	Newspaper	May- June 12	\$0 (PSA)			
	VT Life Magazine	magazine	May- June 13	\$xxx.xx			
		co-					
	VT Days events	sponsorship	May- June 14	\$xxxx.xx			
	Burlington Area Newspaper						
	Group	Newspaper	May- June 15	\$xx.xx			
	Southern newspaper group	Newspaper	May- June 16	\$xxx.xx			
	VPR	Radio	May- June 17	\$0 (PSA)			
	92.9 FM	Radio	May- June 18	\$xxx.xx			
Total VT Days							

Develop a flowchart, or schedule, outlining ad appearances in each media source

This step will help you keep track of where your media dollars are going and will help show any overlap that may occur. This process is necessary to work out any discrepancies or holes that may not have been covered.

Media Plan Flow Chart														
			Length of time ad is run Months Jan- Dec (1-12)											
Source	Ad type	campaign	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Elk Publishing	PT -AD	fishing in SP												
Hawkeye	PT-AD	fishing in SP												
LCI fishing Derby	SPRSHI P	fishing in SP												
Primemedia	radio	fishing in SP												
Vermont Sporting Journal	PT-AD	fishing in SP												
Burlington Area Newspaper Group	PT-AD	overnight camp							Γ					<u> </u>
Clear Channel Broadcasting	Radio	overnight camp												
MT Mansfield TV Inc	Cable TV	overnight camp												
New Market Press	PT-AD	overnight camp												
Seven Days Newspaper	PT-AD	overnight camp												
TVRA LLC	Cable TV	overnight camp												
VPR	Radio	overnight camp												
World	PT-AD	overnight camp												
Barton Chronicle	PT-AD	day use												
Newport Daily news	PT-AD	day use												
NE Kingdom Radio	Radio	day use												
VT Life Magazine	PT-AD	day use												
Elk Publishing - web ad	web	day use							Г					
Seven Days Newspaper	PSA	VT Days												
VT Life Magazine	PT-AD	VT Days												
VT Days events	SPRSHI P	VT Days												
Burlington Area Newspaper Group	PT-AD	VT Days												
Southern newspaper group	PT-AD	VT Days												
VPR	Radio PSA	VT Days												
92.9 FM	Radio	VT Days												

Summarize your plan

Your media plan and summary should outline how your budget will be allocated.

At this stage you can fine tune it by adding supplemental media (press releases, local outlets, sponsorships, and collaborative outreach with other organizations) to make up the rest of the budget, fill in any gaps that may appear and further expand your reach.

Your finished media plan should include:

- a description of your target audience,
- prime objectives,
- strategies and tactics,
- any alternative plans,
- a budget summary,
- a media flowchart for tracking that includes next steps/decision dates.

Negotiate with media representatives to execute your plan (or hire a media buyer.)

See link for guidance on how to negotiate with media representatives.

Tips on negotiating rates - http://www.businesstown.com/advertising/basic-tips.asp

If budget allows contact one of the state's promotional vendors to assist with media buys or contact the Office of the Chief Marketing Officer at marketing@state.vt.us for assistance.

Evaluating your media plan after execution

When your media buy is completed, your ads executed, and the plan finished its run how do you evaluate its effectiveness? Did you get what you paid for?

Evaluating plan effectiveness

Did you develop a set of objectives during the media planning process? What were they? For example, you wanted to increase water quality awareness and sell 5,000 awareness stickers to fund a water source clean up. Were your objectives fulfilled?

It is important to analyze what the end result of your media campaign was. These results can offer insight for a future media plan. If your objectives were not fulfilled, examine the mediums you advertised with. Perhaps they were the wrong medium for reaching your primary target. Perhaps the run was not long enough; the ad was not large enough or was not placed in the most effective position within the medium. At this point take the time to reexamine your current plan, pull out the positive results and tweak the weaker ones.

Did you get what you paid for?

Every medium should provide a post analysis of your buy, which can differs depending on the source.

- **Newspaper:** you should receive a tear sheet, the actual newspaper page that your ad ran on, torn from the paper. This will show you the reproduction quality, how cluttered the page was and what section and actual page position you received.
- **Magazines:** If you ran a magazine ad, you should receive a copy of the publication to see where your ad fell in the magazine.
- **Radio and Television:** you should receive a small report illustrating what you purchased compared to what actually ran. It includes number of commercials, day-parts and rating points (in television).
- **Web (online ads):** you should receive a monthly report that includes a visitor count and a click through rate

NOTE: If your post-buy information reports show that you did not get what you purchased, negotiate a make-good or credit. A make-good is either a free repeat of your ad at a mutually agreeable time/place or a deeply discounted rate for next run. If your campaign is over, you should ask for a credit against your buy.